Contraband Cell Phones in CDCR Prisons and Conservation Camps

Contraband cell phone usage is a problem that CDCR takes very seriously. Cell phone use by inmates poses a security risk by circumventing the monitoring processes in prisons. Modern cell phones can record video images, record conversations, provide Internet capability and be used to commit crimes. CDCR has identified occasions throughout the state when cell phones were used to aid in the commission of various breaches of safety and security.

CDCR staff discovered the following number of contraband cell phones in prisons and conservation camps:
- 1,400 2007;
- 2,800 in 2008;
- 6,995 in 2009;
- 10,760 in 2010;
- 15,000 in 2011;
- 11,788 in 2012;
- 12,151 in 2013;
- 2,809 for the first three months of 2014

In response to this problem, CDCR established a Warden's Advisory Group (WAG) on Cell Phone Interdiction. The WAG is charged with examining cell phone interdiction and related technologies.

Penalties

- **Senate Bill 26**: In October 2011, Governor Edmund G. Brown signed Senate Bill (SB) 26 into law, thereby making it a misdemeanor for possessing a cell phone in prison and/or attempting to introduce one into prison.
  - Visitors, contractors, or staff who attempt to introduce an unauthorized wireless devices into prison are subject to a misdemeanor prosecution and/or $5,000 fine per device.
  - Penalties for inmates include up to 90 days good-time credit forfeiture.
  - SB 26 also facilitates deployment of technologies to disrupt unauthorized cellular transmissions from prisons. The technology, called Managed Access, still allows authorized and emergency calls to pass through the system. See SB 26 Chaptered Bill Language: http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/postquery?bill_number=sb_26&sess=CUR&house=B&author=padilla

Solutions

- **Executive Order B-11-11** (October 2011) calls for an increase in physical searches of people who enter prisons, development of technologies to disrupt unauthorized transmissions and a report on the feasibility of creating "airport-style" security at all prison entrances. See Executive Order B-11-11 http://gov.ca.gov/news.php?id=17258

- **Managed Access Project**: Managed Access technology uses a secure cellular umbrella over a specified area blocking unauthorized cellular communication transmissions, such as e-mails, texts, phone calls, or Internet access.

Managed Access

In April 2012, CDCR announced a contract award to Global Tel*Link for the Inmate/Ward Telephone System and Managed Access System. The implementation of the Managed Access System will be paid for by Global Tel*Link **at no cost to taxpayers**.

CDCR expects to have the Managed Access System implemented at all institutions by 2015.

Previously, CDCR had worked with both the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the California Technology Agency (CTA) to test the Managed Access System. CDCR, FCC and CTA staff visited a prison in Mississippi where this technology was successfully deployed to assess its feasibility for installation in California, they also visited a pilot demonstration at a prison in South Carolina using managed access systems. The FCC fully supports this technology in combating the growing problem of contraband cell phone use in state correctional facilities. The evidence in Mississippi, where they intercepted over 26,000 text messages in the early days of deployment, strongly suggested that other correctional organizations, such as CDCR, could also realize the benefits of the technology.

In 2011, CDCR tested this technology at two prisons over an 11 day period (approximately 8 hours a day). During the test, the equipment detected a total of **2,593** unique wireless devices and blocked more than **25,000** unauthorized communication attempts (calls, texts, emails, efforts to log on to the Internet from a smart phone, etc.), or an average of **2,500** per day.

CDCR is currently testing the technology at two institutions with plans to install the technology at all institutions by 2014.

K9 Program:

CDCR currently has 35 dogs in the K-9 program based at various institutions.

The dogs go through a 160-hour, four-week training with their handler and will eventually perform narcotic and contraband searches in the institutions and potentially help other law enforcement agencies during probation and parole sweeps.

The teams are strategically placed at institutions statewide so they may travel, search, and return to the institution within an eight-hour period.

The future goal for CDCR is to have at least three dogs at every institution. The goal is to have a variety of both aggressive alert dogs which bark when they find contraband as well as passive alert dogs that are trained to sit when alerting their handler. CDCR received its new set of passive alert training dogs in October 2013. These Labrador retrievers are being trained as passive alert dogs.

CDCR has three regional coordinators who make sure all of the K9s are working every day by either conducting searches at the institutions or working on parole/probation sweeps to make sure their senses stay sharp.

Each dog is required to train at least eight hours a week as well as participate in monthly training conducted by the Statewide Canine Coordinator to ensure the dogs are working up to standards.

In 2012, CDCR K-9s tracked down approximately 3,890 cell phones alone. Also seized by the help of the K-9s was 36.25lbs marijuana, 3 ounces of cocaine, 44.04 ounces of methamphetamine, 876.88lbs of tobacco, and 125.98 ounces of heroin inside the institutions alone.

In addition, the units provide assistance to CDCR's Division of Adult Parole, specifically with the Parolee Apprehension Teams, during their operations to locate fugitive parolees in the community. K9 teams also provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies by conducting searches of suspected drug houses during search warrant operations.

For more on CDCR's K9 Program check out the webpage:
http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Contraband-Cell-Phones/K-9-overview.html